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REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed August 16, 2004, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration. To further the prosecution of this Application, Applicants submit the following remarks. The claims as now presented are believed to be in allowable condition.

Claims 1-28 are pending in this Application. Claims 1, 3, 5, 8, 13, 15, 17, 20, 23, 25 and 27 are independent claims.

Specification

The Abstract was objected to as being over 150 words. The Abstract has been amended to number fewer than 150 words. Accordingly, the objection to the Abstract has been overcome.

Rejections under §103

Claims 1, 3, 5, 7-10, 12-13, 15, 17, 19-20, 22-23, 25, 27 and 29-32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Publication No. US 2001/0047260 A1 to Walker (hereinafter Walker) in view of U.S. Publication No. US 2002/0052747A1 to Sarukkai (hereinafter Sarkkai). The Examiner further rejected claims 2, 4, 6, 11, 14, 16, 18, 21, 24, 26, and 28 as being unpatentable over Walker in view of Sarukkai and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,658,389 to Alpdemir (hereinafter Alpdemir).

Enclosed herewith are affidavits of Lewis D. Dodrill and Ryan A. Danner, co-inventors of the present application. An affidavit regarding inventor Steven J. Martin (signed by Robert Barr, Vice President Intellectual Property for Cisco Systems, Inc., Assignee of the present Application) is also enclosed herewith. The enclosed affidavits under 37 C.F.R. §1.131 constitute an uncontroverted unequivocal statement as to the correctness of the inventorship and that the invention was conceived prior to the priority date of the Walker reference (May 17, 2000), the Sarukkai reference (August 11, 2000) and the Alpdemir reference (March 24, 2000). Applicants respectfully submit that the Walker reference, the

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Sarukkai reference, and the Alpdemir reference applied by the Examiner do not qualify as prior art since the affidavits show that the present invention was conceived and reduced to practice prior to the priority date of the Walker reference, the Sarukkai reference, and the Alpdemir reference. As such, the present invention cannot be anticipated by the Walker reference, the Sarukkai reference, and the Alpdemir reference, taken alone or in combination.

Accordingly, the rejection of claims 1, 3, 5, 7-10, 12-13, 15, 17, 19-20, 22-23, 25, 27 and 29-32 as being unpatentable over Walker and Sarukkai is believed to have been overcome, and the rejection of claims 2, 4, 6, 11, 14, 16, 18, 21, 24, 26, and 28 as being unpatentable over Walker in view of Sarukkai and further in view of Alpdemir is also believed to have been overcome.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, this Application should be in condition for allowance. A Notice to this affect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this Response, that the Application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the Applicant's Representative at the number below.

Applicants hereby petition for any extension of time which is required to maintain the pendency of this case. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 50-0901.

If the enclosed papers or fees are considered incomplete, the Patent Office is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned collect at (508) 366-9600, in Westborough, Massachusetts.

If the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office deems a fee necessary, this fee may be charged to the account of the undersigned, Deposit Account No. 50-0901.

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If the enclosed papers or fees are considered incomplete, the Patent Office is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned collect at (508) 366-9600, in Westborough, Massachusetts.

Respectfully submitted,

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